

identifier device that is activated upon consumption of the consumer product to transmit product identification data to a data acquisition device of the consumer;

wherein each of the one or more automated vending machines is configured to transmit transaction data to the data acquisition device of the consumer;

wherein any transaction data and any product identification data received by the data acquisition device of the consumer is stored as purchasing data in a memory of the data acquisition device and is periodically transmitted from the data acquisition device to a data collection center remote from and not in communication with the automated vending machine;

at the data collection center, analyzing the purchasing data received from the data acquisition device of the consumer to determine a customized message for the consumer; and

communicating the customized message from the data collection center to the data acquisition device of the consumer.

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cont'd* 23. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the product identifier device is selected from the group consisting of an RFI transmitter device, a bar code transmitter device, and a magnetic medium coupled with a transmitter.

24. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the consumer inputs personal preferences into the data acquisition device; and  
wherein the personal preferences are stored in the memory as part of the purchasing data.

25. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the data acquisition device is selected from the group consisting of an RFI tag reader, a magnetic medium reader, a bar code reader, cellular telephone, and a digital computer; and  
wherein the data acquisition device is configured for communicating with the data collection center via a communication link.

26. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the purchasing data is periodically transmitted from the data acquisition device to the data collection center in response to polling by the data collection center of the data acquisition device.

27. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the data acquisition device establishes communication with the data collection center, without interaction by the consumer, in order to periodically transmit the purchasing data to the data collection center.

28. (new) A system for tracking consumer purchasing data for consumer products comprising:

one or more automated vending machines for providing one or more consumer products to the consumer, each of the one or more consumer product being configured with a product identifier device that is activated upon consumption of the consumer product to transmit product identification data to a data acquisition device of the consumer, each of the one or more automated vending machines being configured to transmit transaction data to the data acquisition device of the consumer;

wherein any transaction data and any product identification data received by the data acquisition device of the consumer is stored as purchasing data in a memory of the data acquisition device; and

a data collection center remote from and not in communication with the automated vending machine for periodically receiving the purchasing data from the data acquisition device, analyzing the purchasing data to determine a customized message for the consumer, and communicating the customized message from the data collection center to the data acquisition device of the consumer.

29. (new) The system of claim 28, wherein the product identifier device is selected from the group consisting of an RFI transmitter device, a bar code transmitter device, and a magnetic medium coupled with a transmitter.

30. (new) The system of claim 28, wherein the consumer inputs personal preferences into the data acquisition device; and

wherein the personal preferences are stored in the memory as part of the purchasing data.